

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 07512 291052 Z

45

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

PRS-01 RSR-01 /084 W

----- 083760

O R 291025 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2259

DOD WASHDC IMMEDIATE

HQ 3 AF RAF MILDENHALL ENG

INFO HQUSAF/SAFUSI

ESD LG HANSCOM AFB

CINCUSAFE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07512

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, MARR, UK, US

SUBJECT: COBRA MIST

REF: LONDON 7258, STATE 126281

1. DAILY EXPRESS (A. M., 29 JUNE) CARRIES FOLLOWING
STORY UNDER HEADLINE " MISSILE SPY SHUTDOWN SHOCK":
" THE SECRET ' RADIO SPY' MISSILE EARLY WARNING STATION
AT ORFORD NESS, ON THE SUFFOLK COAST, IS TO BE CLOSED
DOWN JUST TWO YEARS AFTER IT CAME INTO USE.
" AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO THIS EFFECT BY THE DEFENCE
MINISTRY IS EXPECTED TODAY.
" AND IT APPEARS THAT RECENT SUCCESS BY THE RUSSIANS
IN ' JAMMING' SOME OF THE WEST'S MOST SOPHISTICATED
MILITARY RADIO ACTIVITY, HAS PLAYED A MAJOR PART IN
THE DECISION TO PUT UP THE SHUTTERS AT ORFORD NESS.
" CERTAINLY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT-- WHICH PAID
MOST OF THE COST OF THE 40 MILLION POUND STERLING
COMPLEX AND FOOTS THE LION'S SHARE OF THE MAINTENANCE
BILLS-- HAD DECIDED THAT THE BASE IS LESS EFFICIENT
THAN HAD BEEN HOPED.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LONDON 07512 291052 Z

" THE COMPLEX IS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF
RADAR AND SATELLITE SURVEILLANCE WITH WHICH THE WEST
HAS BEEN ABLE TO SCRUTINISE THE SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH
THE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION AGREEMENT.

RADAR

" ITS OVER- THE- HORIZON RADAR, CODE- NAMED COBRA MIST,
IS DESIGNED TO DETECT A SOVIET MISSILE ATTACK.

" THE ORFORD STATION HAS BEEN ABLE TO EAVESDROP
ON HIGH- FREQUENCY RADIO COMMUNICATIONS-- TOO WEAK FOR
ORDINARY RADIO COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVERS.

" IT WAS AS THOUGH THE WEST HAD ITS OWN RADIO
RECEIVING STATION ACTUALLY SITED IN RUSSIA.

" THIS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR AMERICAN AND R. A. F.
INTELLIGENCE MEN AT ORFORD TO LISTEN IN TO CONVERSATIONS
BETWEEN SOVIET COMMANDERS.

" IT IS ONLY SOME TWO YEARS AGO SINCE THE FIRST
SIGNALS WERE RECEIVED BY THE STATION.

" SINCE THEN THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE THERE
HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT BY AMERICAN BASED CONTRACTORS,
THE RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA.

" THE DECISION TO SHUT DOWN THE STATION IS LIKELY TO
BE WELCOMED BY LOCAL HOUSEHOLDERS.

" FOR SINCE IT CAME INTO OPERATION THERE HAVE BEEN
CONSTANT COMPLAINTS RANGING FROM A FEAR OF ' BECOMING A
TARGET FOR THE RUSSIANS' TO ANGER OVER RADIO AND
TELEVISION RECEPTION."

2. MOD, 3 AF STILL PLAN TO PUBLISH AGREED PRESS RELEASE
1400 LOCAL (0900 EDT) TODAY.

ANNENBERG

CONFIDENTIAL

NNNNMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 JUN 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LONDON07512
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730633/aaaajvcj.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 LONDON 7258, 73 STATE 126281
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Aug-2001 by willialc>; RELEASED <13-Aug-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <14 FEB 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980306
Subject: COBRA MIST
TAGS: MARR, PINR, UK, US
To: CINCUSAFE
DOD WASHDC
ESD LG HANSCOM AFB
EUR
HQ 3 AF RAF MILDENHALL ENG
HQUSAF/ SAFUSI
SECSTATE WASHDC

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005